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COMMITTEE ON CONFERENCES
Organizational session for 1994

ANNOTATED PROVISIONAL AGENDA FOR THE ORGANIZATIONAL SESSION

1. Election of officers.

2. Adoption of the agenda.

3. Organization of work for 1994.

4. Programme of work for 1994.

5. Other business.

ANNOTATIONS

1. Election of officers

Rule 103 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly provides that committees other than Main Committees:

"... shall elect a Chairman, one or more Vice-Chairmen and a Rapporteur. These officers shall be elected on the basis of equitable geographical distribution, experience and personal competence".

In past years, the Committee on Conferences has elected, in addition to the Chairman, three Vice-Chairmen and a Rapporteur.

At its organizational session for 1989, on 1 March 1989, the Committee agreed in principle that henceforth the chairmanship would rotate annually among the regional groups.

2. Adoption of the agenda

3. Organization of work for 1994

At its 341st meeting, on 27 August 1992, 1/ the Committee on Conferences decided to maintain its biennial programme of work, dealing with items relating to documentation in even years, and those relating to meetings in odd years. The Committee also decided that some items would be considered on an annual basis.

At its organizational session for 1993, on 2 March 1993, the Committee adopted its agenda for 1993 and requested the Secretariat to submit a draft biennial agenda for 1994-1995 to the Committee at its organizational session for 1994.

At its 331st meeting, on 20 August 1991, the Committee on Conferences adopted guidelines for the Committee's consideration of and action on inter-sessional departures. In organizing its work and in keeping with those guidelines, the Committee may wish:

(a) To meet as required to consider proposed inter-sessional departures from the approved calendar that require the explicit authorization of the Committee;

(b) To conduct as much business as possible in informal consultations in order to curtail the number of official meetings, in particular by entrusting certain tasks to its Bureau.

Further meetings may be required in compliance with paragraph 6 of General Assembly resolution 35/10 A of 3 November 1980, by which the proposals affecting the schedule of conferences and meetings made during sessions of the Assembly shall be reviewed by the Committee when administrative implications are being considered under the requirements of rule 153 of the rules of procedure of the Assembly.

4. Programme of work for 1994

The terms of reference of the Committee are set forth in paragraph 4 of General Assembly resolution 43/222 B of 21 December 1988. As noted above, the Committee adopted its agenda for 1993 at its organizational session for 1993 and requested the Secretariat to present a draft biennial agenda for 1994-1995 to the Committee at its organizational session for 1994.

Annexed to the present document is the draft agenda for the biennium, followed by a draft annotated agenda for 1994, which takes into account the earlier decisions of the Committee and subsequent decisions and resolutions of the General Assembly. The Committee may also wish to determine the timing and duration of its substantive session of 1994 and to specify the documentation requirements.

5. Other business

## Notes

1/ See Official Records of the General Assembly, Forty-seventh Session, Supplement No. 32 (A/47/32).

Annex

DRAFT AGENDA FOR 1994

1. Adoption of the agenda.

2. Calendar of conferences and meetings:

   (a) Adoption of the draft revised calendar of conferences and meetings for 1995;

   (b) Improved utilization of conference-servicing resources:

      (i) Meeting statistics of United Nations organs;

      (ii) Conference services at Vienna;

      (iii) Legal basis and experience of all subsidiary bodies which meet away from their established headquarters;

   (c) Requests for exceptions to section I, paragraph 7, of General Assembly resolution 40/243.

3. Control and limitation of documentation:

   (a) Provision of written meeting records to subsidiary organs of the General Assembly;

   (b) Implementation of the rules and regulations on control and limitation of documentation: compliance with the six-week rule for the issuance of pre-session documentation.

4. United Nations publications policy: implementation of General Assembly resolution 43/222 B, paragraph 4 (h).

5. Review of the programme performance of the United Nations for the biennium 1992-1993: section 32/section 41I, Conference services.

6. Review of the Office of Conference Services.

7. Other business.

8. Adoption of the report.

DRAFT AGENDA FOR 1995

1. Adoption of the agenda.

2. Calendar of conferences and meetings:

   (a) Adoption of the draft calendar of conferences and meetings for 1996-1997;

   (b) Improved utilization of conference-servicing resources:

      (i) Meeting statistics of United Nations organs;

      (ii) Conference services at Vienna;

      (iii) Existing conference resources, services and facilities within the United Nations;

   (c) Requests for exceptions to section I, paragraph 7, of General Assembly resolution 40/243.

3. Improved coordination of conferences within the United Nations system: implementation of General Assembly resolution 43/222 B, paragraph 4 (f).

4. Meetings of organs and programmes not funded from the regular budget of the United Nations.

5. Application of new technology to conference-servicing.

6. Review of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1996-1997: Conference services.

7. Other business.

8. Adoption of the report.

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Annotations for the substantive session of 1994

1. Adoption of the agenda

2. Calendar of conferences and meetings

   (a) Adoption of the draft revised calendar of conferences and meetings for 1995

In line with past practice, the Committee on Conferences will submit to the General Assembly at its forty-ninth session the draft revised calendar of conferences and meetings for 1995.

In paragraph 18 of its resolution 46/190 of 20 December 1991, the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to submit to it at its forty-seventh session and as appropriate at subsequent sessions, through the Committee on Conferences and the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions, a consolidated statement relating to the number and costs of scheduled special conferences, bearing in mind the annual limit of five as set out in resolution 40/243 of 18 December 1985 and endorsed by the Assembly in its resolution 41/213 of 19 December 1986. The requested report, containing information on the special conferences scheduled for 1995, will be submitted to the Committee at its substantive session.

(b) Improved utilization of conference-servicing resources:

(i) Meeting statistics of United Nations organs

Since 1983, the Committee on Conferences has studied a series of reports showing the meeting statistics of a number of United Nations organs in New York, Geneva and Vienna. In paragraph 4 of its resolution 44/196 A of 21 December 1989, the General Assembly requested the Committee to review the methodology on conference-servicing utilization rates in order to provide, if possible, a more accurate assessment of the overall use of conference resources with a view to enabling United Nations bodies to make the optimum use of conference services and to facilitate, where necessary, continued rationalization of their meeting requirements.

At its 323rd meeting, on 28 August 1990, the Committee on Conferences agreed to put into experimental use a newly proposed methodology to run parallel with the existing methodology for the next three years.

At its 341st meeting, on 27 August 1992, the Committee, inter alia, requested the Secretariat to expand the representational sample of bodies included in future papers on the experimental methodology and to provide a historical perspective of the trends perceived in all future reports on the utilization of conference-servicing resources.

At its 348th meeting, on 18 May 1993, the Committee agreed to continue with the experimental methodology, and requested the Secretariat to expand the information presented to include analyses of trends perceived and capacity utilization figures.

In paragraph 7 of its resolution 48/222 A of 23 December 1993, the General Assembly welcomed the decision of the Committee on Conferences to continue the experimental methodology in respect of the utilization of conference-servicing resources, and requested the Secretariat to expand the information presented to include analyses of trends and figures on the utilization of conference-servicing capacity.

In view of earlier decisions of the Committee and the aforementioned request of the General Assembly, the Secretariat would propose again to submit two written reports on meeting statistics, the first in accordance with the methodology agreed upon by the Committee, the second including analyses of trends and figures on the utilization of conference-servicing capacity.

Moreover, in paragraph 8 of its resolution 48/222 A, the General Assembly endorsed the decision of the Committee on Conferences to request its Chairman to consult on its behalf with the chairmen of organs concerned, where the utilization factor is lower than the established benchmark figure applicable for the last three sessions, and requested the Committee to report the results of the consultations to the Assembly at its forty-ninth session. Should the Committee so decide, the Secretariat, in consultation with the Chairman, would provide a written report on the aforementioned consultations.

(ii) Conference services at Vienna

At its 343rd meeting, on 2 March 1993, the Committee on Conferences decided to consider the question of conference services at Vienna, and requested the Secretariat to prepare a written report thereon for its substantive session of 1993. At its 351st meeting, on 20 May 1993, the Committee reviewed and took note of a note by the Secretariat on the item (A/AC.172/1993/CRP.5).

The Committee also requested the Secretariat to prepare an extensive background paper describing the origins and evolution of the question, and the two positions taken on it, to be submitted to the Committee at its resumed substantive session of 1993.

At its 356th meeting, on 15 September 1993, the Committee reviewed the requested note (A/AC.172/1993/CRP.5/Add.1). It welcomed the confirmation by the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) of that body's agreement in principle to participate in unified conference services administered by the United Nations, and urged the Secretary-General to conclude the negotiations as quickly as possible. Moreover, the Committee decided to remain seized of the matter.

In paragraph 14 of its resolution 48/222 A, the General Assembly reiterated its view, expressed in section VIII of its resolution 44/201 A of 21 December 1989, on the desirability of the establishment of unified conference services at Vienna and, in that context, stressed that the combined financial burden for providing conference services to the United Nations Office at Vienna and UNIDO should, in the long run, benefit from the unification agreement, and urged the Secretary-General to conclude the negotiations with UNIDO in that regard as quickly as possible and to report thereon to the Assembly no later than at its forty-ninth session.

If the Committee so decides, the Secretariat would present an oral report at the substantive session of 1994, containing updated information on the item.

(iii) Legal basis and experience of all subsidiary bodies which meet away from their established headquarters

During consideration of the draft calendar of conferences and meetings for 1994-1995 at its 356th and 357th meetings, on 15 and 16 September 1993, the Committee on Conferences noted that some bodies were scheduled to meet away from their established headquarters, which constituted a departure from the established headquarters rule laid down in General Assembly resolution 40/243 of 18 December 1985. In this context, the Committee requested the Secretariat to

prepare an analytical report on the legal basis and experience of all subsidiary bodies that meet away from their established headquarters and to submit that report to the Committee at its substantive session of 1994.

In addition, in paragraph 20 of its resolution 48/222 A, the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to review the legal basis and experience of all subsidiary bodies that meet away from their established headquarters, thus constituting a departure from resolution 40/243, and to report thereon to the Assembly at its forty-ninth session through the Committee on Conferences. Should the Committee so decide, the Secretariat would provide a written report on the matter to the Committee at its substantive session of 1994.

(c) Requests for exceptions to section I, paragraph 7, of General Assembly resolution 40/243

In paragraph 15 of its resolution 47/202 A, the General Assembly demanded that all subsidiary organs of the Assembly comply with the provisions of section I, paragraph 7, of its resolution 40/243, whereby the Assembly decided that no subsidiary organ of the General Assembly may meet at United Nations Headquarters during a regular session of the Assembly unless explicitly authorized by the Assembly.

In accordance with the procedure established by the Committee at its 1986 session, and reaffirmed at its 1992 session, chairmen of subsidiary organs of the General Assembly that wish to meet at Headquarters during regular sessions of the Assembly submit their requests to the Chairman of the Committee on Conferences. Requests so received would be considered by the Committee on the basis of a conference room paper. It should be noted that the conference room paper would be issued as requests are received, i.e., after the six-week rule for issuance of pre-session documentation.

3. Control and limitation of documentation:

(a) Provision of written meeting records to subsidiary organs of the General Assembly

At its 312th meeting, on 20 August 1990, the Committee on Conferences decided to monitor the provision of summary records on a regular basis. Subsequently, in its resolution 45/238 B of 21 December 1990, the General Assembly requested the Committee on Conferences to continue to review the question of the provision of summary records on a regular basis and to report thereon to the Assembly as appropriate.

At its 336th meeting, on 24 August 1992, the Committee considered a conference room paper (A/AC.172/1992/CRP.4), which presented statistical information on the number of meetings with summary records in New York, Geneva and Vienna for the period 1988-1991.

At its 347th meeting, on 18 May 1993, the Committee reviewed notes by the Secretariat on the criteria for, status of and guidelines on the provision of written meeting records (A/AC.172/1993/CRP.6) and on the possibility of issuing

the verbatim records of the Security Council in final form only (A/AC.172/1993/CRP.7).

In paragraph 16 of its resolution 47/202 B, the General Assembly decided that, at its forty-ninth session, there should be a comprehensive review of, inter alia, the need for, usefulness and timely issuance of verbatim and summary records, on the basis of a report by the Secretary-General submitted through the Committee on Conferences and the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions.

Subsequently, in paragraph 3 of its resolution 48/222 B, the General Assembly encouraged all bodies currently entitled to written meeting records to review the need for such records, particularly verbatim records, and to communicate their recommendations to the Assembly at its forty-ninth session.

The Secretary-General, in accordance with paragraph 16 of General Assembly resolution 47/202 B, would present a report on, inter alia, the need for, usefulness and timely issuance of verbatim and summary records, through the Committee on Conferences and the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions. In order to assist the Assembly in carrying out the comprehensive review called for in paragraph 16 of its resolution 47/202 B, including the recommendations referred to in paragraph 3 of its resolution 48/222 B, the Committee may wish to review the aforementioned report of the Secretary-General.

Moreover, at its 360th and 361st meetings, on 2 and 3 November 1993, the Committee reviewed section 25E of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1994-1995, Conference services (A/48/6 (sect. 25E)).

In the context of the aforementioned review, the Committee requested the Secretariat to study the possibility of transferring to the Office of Conference Services the staff specialized in the drafting of press releases, so that they could prepare summary records also, and to submit the results of that study to the Committee and to the General Assembly at its forty-ninth session. The Secretariat will submit a draft report on the matter to the Committee at its substantive session of 1994. The report in its final form will be submitted to the General Assembly at its forty-ninth session.

(b) Implementation of the rules and regulations on control and limitation of documentation: compliance with the six-week rule for the issuance of pre-session documentation

By paragraph 12 of its resolution 47/202 B, the General Assembly urged subsidiary organs to review their agendas with a view to enabling the Secretariat's compliance with the six-week rule, inter alia, through combining items and limiting requests for pre-session documentation, and requested the Secretary-General to inform the subsidiary organs of that appeal and to report to the Committee on Conferences on the measures taken to that effect.

At its 347th and 350th meetings, on 18 and 19 May 1993, the Committee considered an interim report on the matter (A/AC.172/1993/CRP.8), on the

understanding that supplementary information would be presented at its substantive session of 1994.

In paragraph 7 of its resolution 47/202 B, the General Assembly urged the Secretary-General to take necessary measures to ensure that pre-session documents for meetings are distributed no less than six weeks before the meetings in all official languages, unless there is a specific decision by the body concerned regarding the timing of issuance of pre-session documentation. In paragraph 8, the Assembly urged the substantive departments of the Secretariat to comply with the rule which requires them to submit pre-session documents to the Office of Conference Services at least 10 weeks before the beginning of sessions, in order to permit processing in time in all official languages.

Moreover, in paragraph 9 of that resolution, the Assembly requested the Secretary-General, in the context of the measures mentioned in paragraphs 7 and 8, to review all of the factors involved in the timely issuance of pre-session documentation, including the quality and timeliness of submission to the Office of Conference Services, and to report thereon to the Assembly at its forty-ninth session through the Committee on Conferences.

In paragraph 1 of its resolution 48/222 B, the General Assembly expressed concern at the late issuance and distribution of documentation, including summary and verbatim records of United Nations bodies.

In paragraph 2, the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to submit to it at its forty-ninth session, through the Committee on Conferences, an analytical report on the factors that contribute to that situation, including the increase in the workload of the Office of Conference Services, the level of staffing, workload standards, the late submission of documents by author departments and the effects of the introduction of technological innovations in the Office of Conference Services.

In paragraph 5, the Assembly requested the Secretary-General to take all necessary measures to ensure that documents are submitted by author departments in compliance with the 10-week rule in order to permit processing in time in all official languages, and to include information on the impact of those measures in the report on compliance with the six-week rule requested in paragraph 9 of resolution 47/202 B.

Should the Committee so decide, the Secretariat would prepare the analytical report requested in paragraph 2 of resolution 48/222 B, including the information requested in paragraph 5 of that resolution, as well as information supplementary to that contained in the 1993 interim report.

4. United Nations publications policy: implementation of General Assembly resolution 43/222 B, paragraph 4 (h)

At its 335th meeting, on 24 August 1992, the Committee on Conferences reviewed a conference room paper that contained an annotated provisional outline of the report on publications policies called for in section VI of General Assembly resolution 46/185 B of 20 December 1991 (A/AC.172/1992/CRP.1). At the

same meeting, the Committee requested the Secretariat to proceed with the report on publications as outlined in the conference room paper, taking into account the views expressed during the discussion.

At its 346th meeting, on 17 May 1993, the Committee considered the draft report of the Secretary-General on United Nations publications policy (A/AC.172/153, annex). The Committee recommended that its comments and observations should be taken into account in the preparation of the final report of the Secretary-General on publications policy to be submitted to the General Assembly at its forty-eighth session.

The Committee may wish to defer further action on this item pending consideration by the General Assembly of the final report on publications policy (A/C.5/48/10), which was submitted to the Assembly at its forty-eighth session.

5. Review of the programme performance of the United Nations for the biennium 1992-1993: section 32/section 41I, Conference services

In its resolution 39/238 of 18 December 1984, the General Assembly approved the recommendations of the Committee for Programme and Coordination, a/ including the recommendation that relevant intergovernmental bodies should review the programme performance report. In accordance with that resolution, the Committee may wish to consider the programme performance for the biennium 1992-1993 for the Office of Conference Services.

6. Review of the Office of Conference Services

In paragraph 1 of its resolution 47/202 C, the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General, in the context of the review of the Office of Conference Services, to continue to monitor various factors affecting the performance of the Office, taking into account paragraph 100 of the report of the Committee on Conferences b/ and the views expressed by Member States in the Fifth Committee, and to provide recommendations thereon to the Assembly at its forty-ninth session, through the Committee on Conferences and the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions.

In paragraph 2 (a) of that resolution, the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to submit to it at its forty-ninth session, through the Committee on Conferences and the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions, in the context of the review mentioned in paragraph 1, a comprehensive review taking into account the reports of external consultants and all the recommendations of the Management Advisory Service, including the cost/benefit aspects of new technologies and the financial implications of the recommendations.

In paragraph 2 (b), the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to undertake a follow-up to the review of the Office of Conference Services by the Management Advisory Service and to submit a report thereon to the Assembly at its forty-ninth session.

Moreover, in section II, paragraph 42, of its resolution 48/228 of 23 December 1993, the General Assembly further requested the Secretary-General

to submit to it at its forty-ninth session a comprehensive study on the organization, management and human resources requirements for the provision of adequate conference services as a basis for the consideration of his proposals for the regular budget for the biennium 1996-1997, and to provide Member States with previous studies on this matter that were carried out during the biennium 1992-1993.

In view of the foregoing, the Secretariat would prepare a comprehensive report taking into account all the requests contained in the resolutions referred to.

In the light of the mandate of the Committee on Conferences to advise the General Assembly on all matters pertaining to the organization of conferences in the United Nations, as set forth in paragraph 4 (a) of Assembly resolution 43/222 B, and of the decisions taken subsequently in the Committee to consider the various aspects of the review of the Office of Conference Services as a whole, the Committee may wish to review the comprehensive study referred to in Assembly resolution 48/228 at its substantive session of 1994.

7. Other business

8. Adoption of the report

Notes

a/ See Official Records of the General Assembly, Thirty-ninth Session, Supplement No. 38 (A/39/38).

b/ Ibid., Forty-seventh Session, Supplement No. 32 (A/47/32).

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